Introduction to the American Community Survey (ACS)

August 31, 2016

Steve Klein
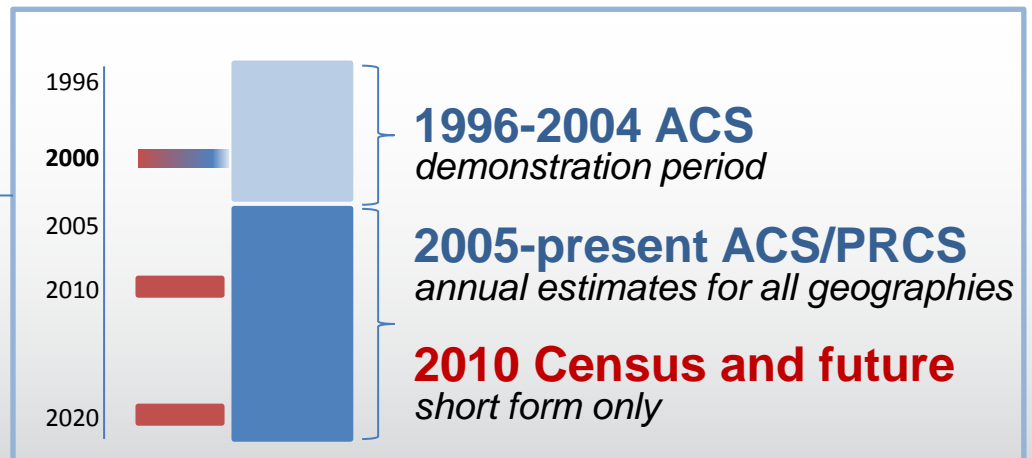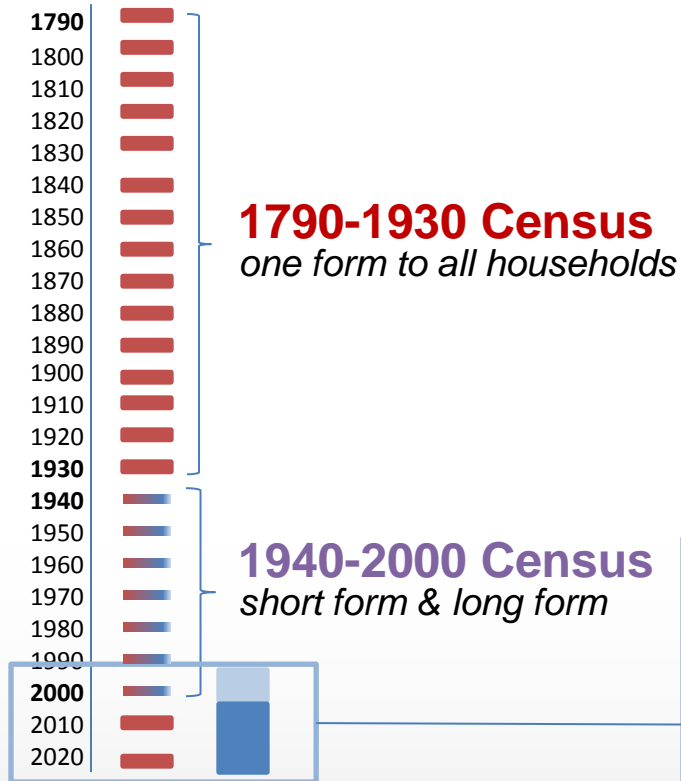American Community Survey Office

Outline

- American Community Survey (ACS) basics

- Resources for learning more

- Accessing ACS data products

- Stay in touch

- Questions/Exercises

ACS Basics

- Ongoing monthly survey sent to 3.5 million addresses per year to produce detailed population and housing estimates each year

  - Visit 20,000 Group Quarter facilities and sample approximately 194,000 residents each year

- Designed to produce *critical information on small areas and small population groups* previously collected on the decennial long form

- Covers 35+ topics and supports over 300 known Federal Government uses

- Data released twice annually

  - 1-year estimates (12 months of data)
  - 5-year estimates (60 months of data)

Census & ACS

1790
1800
1810
1820
1830
1840
1850
1860
1870
1880
1890
1900
1910
1920
1930

1790-1930 Census
one form to all households

1940
1950
1960
1970
1980
1990
2000
2010
2020

1940-2000 Census
short form & long form

1996

2000

2005

2010

2020

1996-2004 ACS
demonstration period

2005-present ACS/PRCS
annual estimates for all geographies

2010 Census and future
short form only

United States™
Census
Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

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How is the ACS Different from a Census?

	ACS	**2010 Census**
purpose	Sample estimates	Official counts
produces	Population characteristics	Population totals
new data every	Year	10 years
data reflect	Period of time	Point in time

ACS Data Collection Process

Online

Mail

Telephone

Personal Visit

Self-Response Modes

Non-Response Modes

ACS Content

Social

Ancestry
Citizenship
Disability
Educational Attainment
Fertility
Grandparents
Language
Marital Status
Migration
School Enrollment
Veterans

Demographic

Age
Hispanic Origin
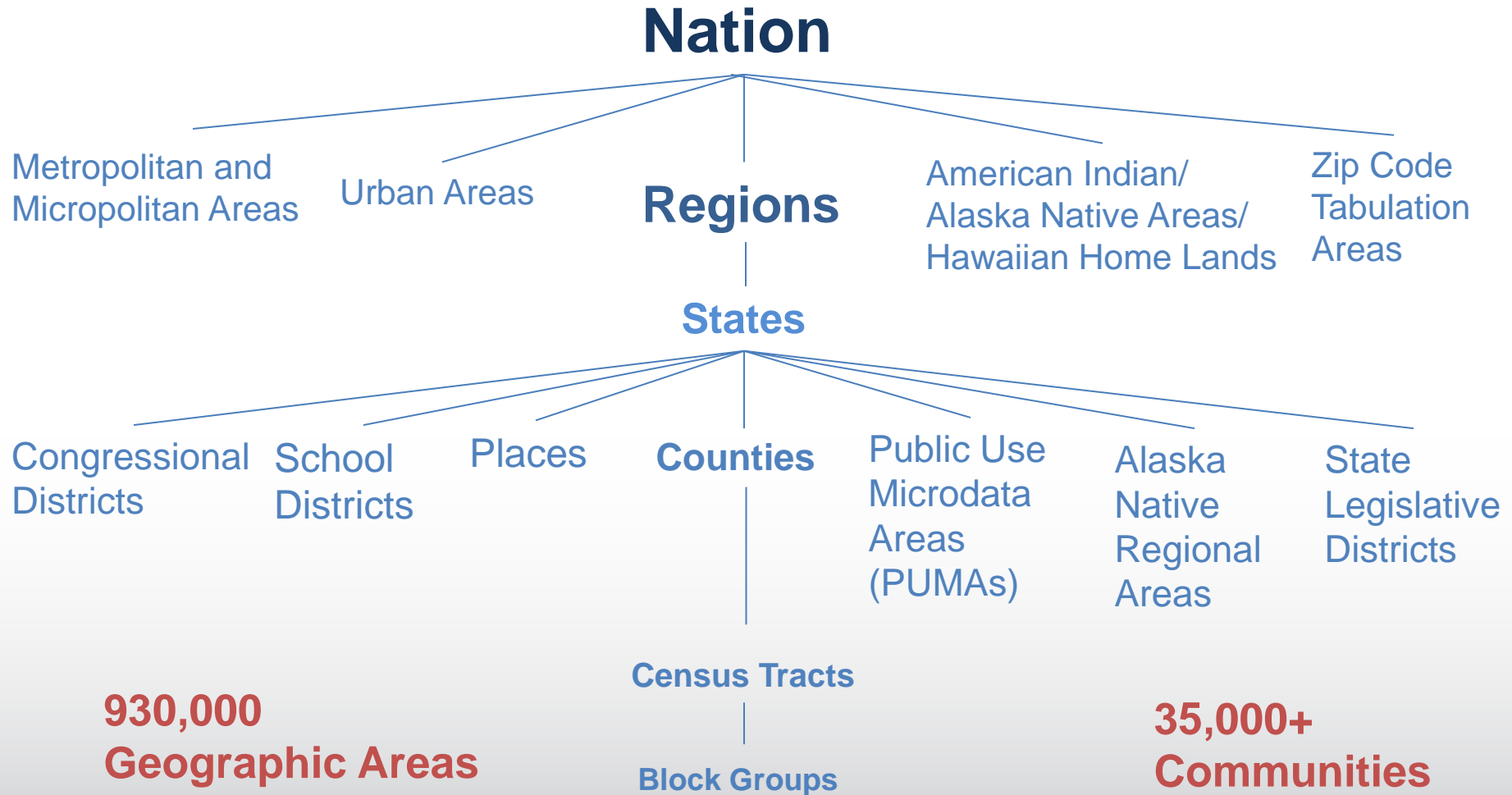Race
Relationship
Sex

Economic

Class of Worker
Commuting
Employment Status
Food Stamps (SNAP)
Health Insurance
Hours/Week,
Weeks/Year
Income
Industry & Occupation

Housing

Computer & Internet Use
Costs (Mortgage, Taxes, Insurance)
Heating Fuel
Home Value
Occupancy
Plumbing/Kitchen Facilities
Structure
Tenure (Own/Rent)
Utilities
Vehicles
Year Built/ Year Moved In

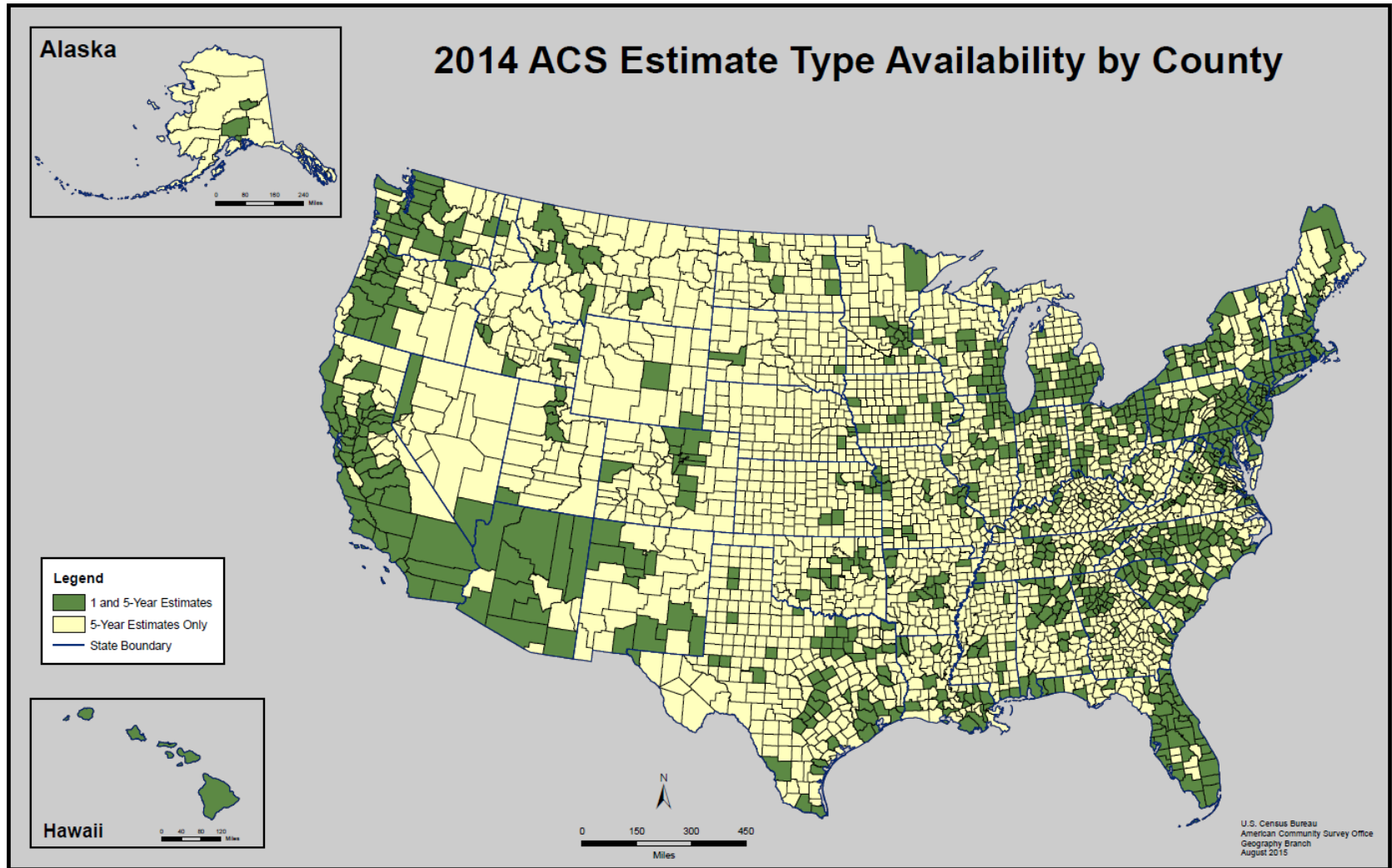**35+ Topics ➡ 1000+ Tables ➡ 11 Billion Estimates**

Selected Census Geographic Concepts

Nation

Metropolitan and Micropolitan Areas

Urban Areas

Regions

American Indian/ Alaska Native Areas/ Hawaiian Home Lands

Zip Code Tabulation Areas

States

Congressional Districts

School Districts

Places

Counties

Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs)

Alaska Native Regional Areas

State Legislative Districts

Census Tracts

Block Groups

930,000 Geographic Areas

35,000+ Communities

Availability of ACS Data Products

Estimated Population of Geographic Area	1-Year Estimates	5-Year Estimates
65,000 or more	X	X
Less than 65,000		X
Release Date	September	December

2014 ACS Estimate Type Availability by County

ACS Main Page

census.gov/acs

Selected Ways to Access

- QuickFacts

- Census Explorer

- OnTheMap for Emergency Management

- Census Business Builder

- Narrative Profiles

- American FactFinder

- Application Programming Interface (API)

Census Explorer
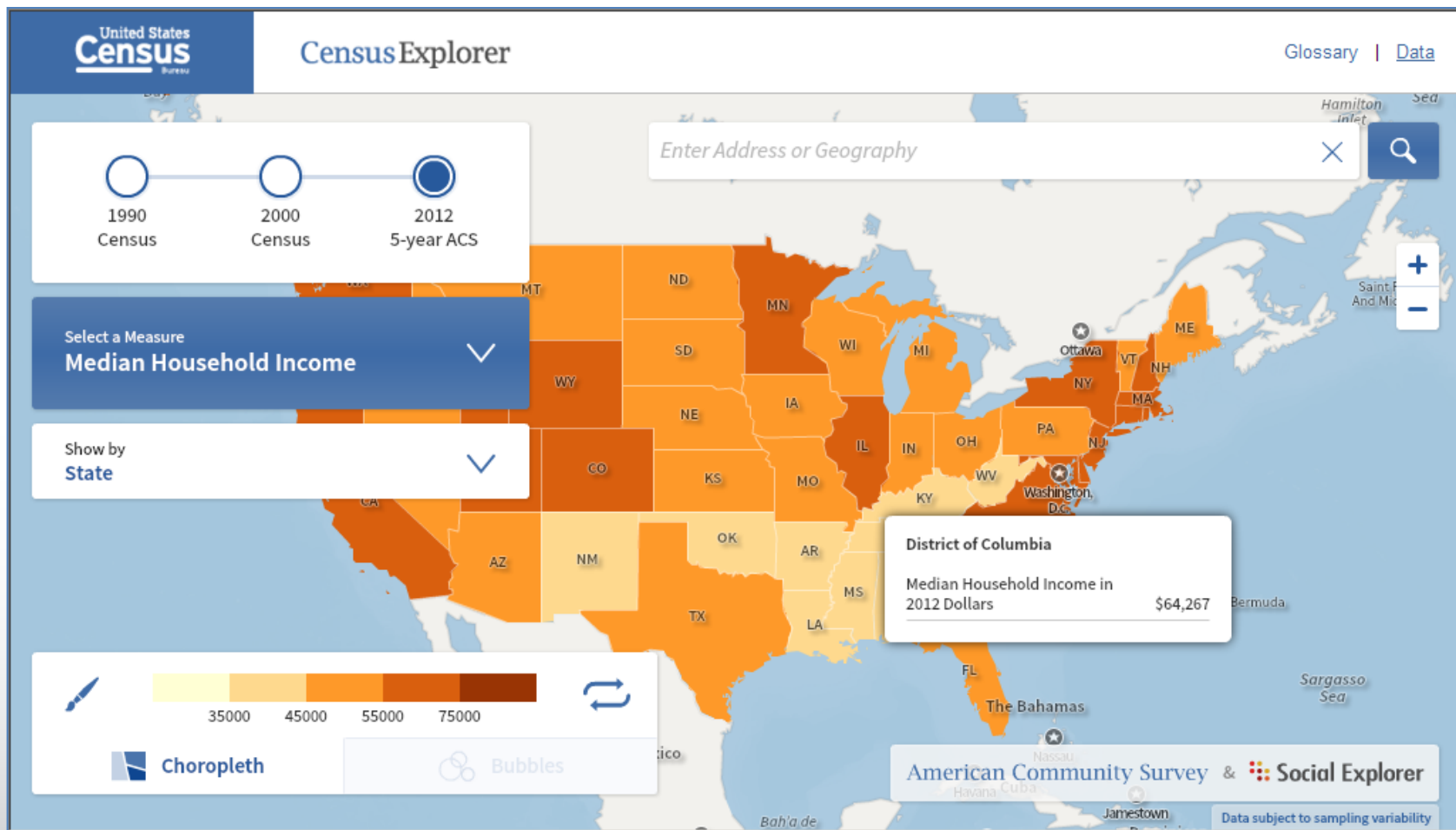
census.gov/censusexplorer

OnTheMap for Emergency Management
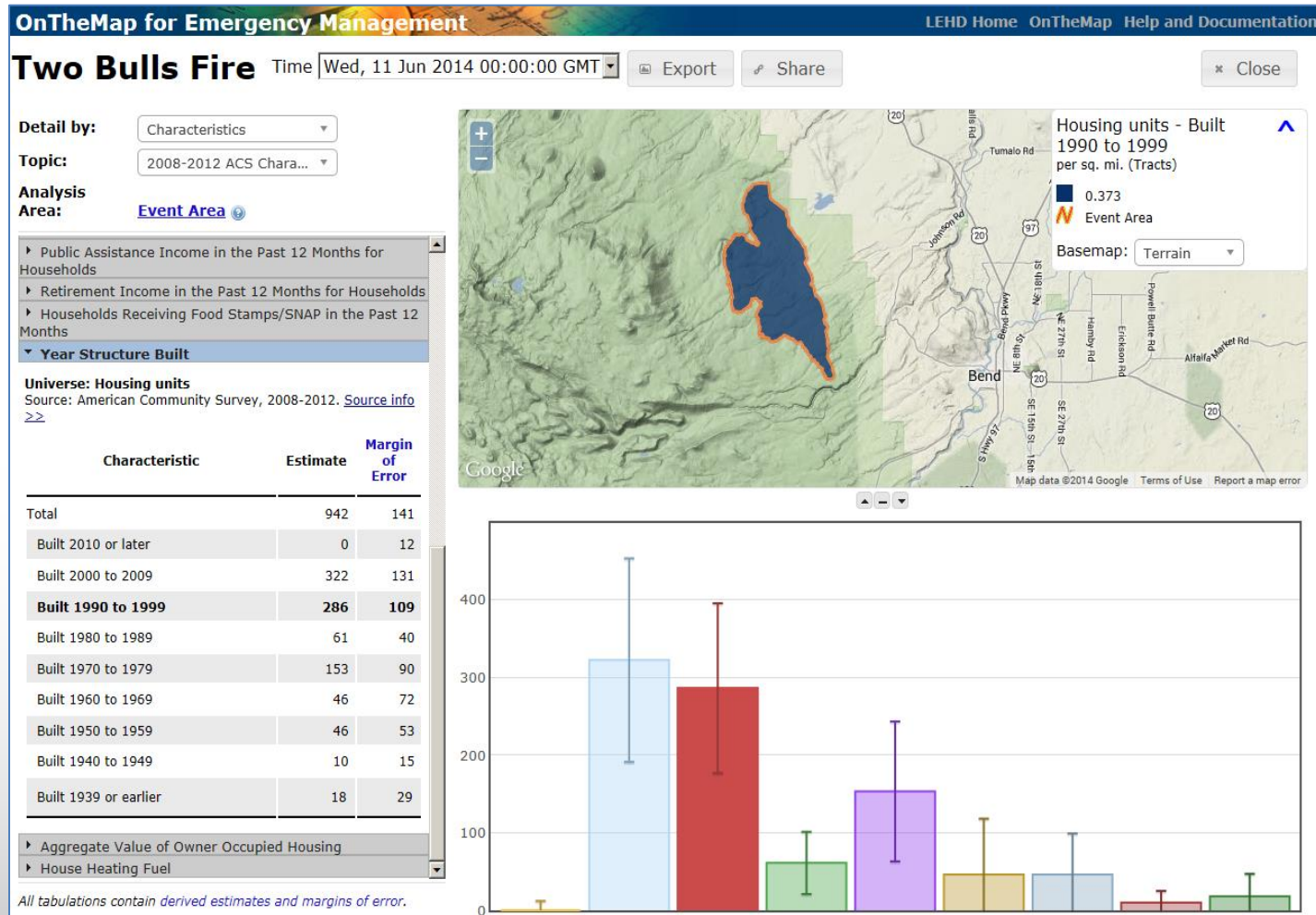
onthemap.ces.census.gov/em

Census Business Builder
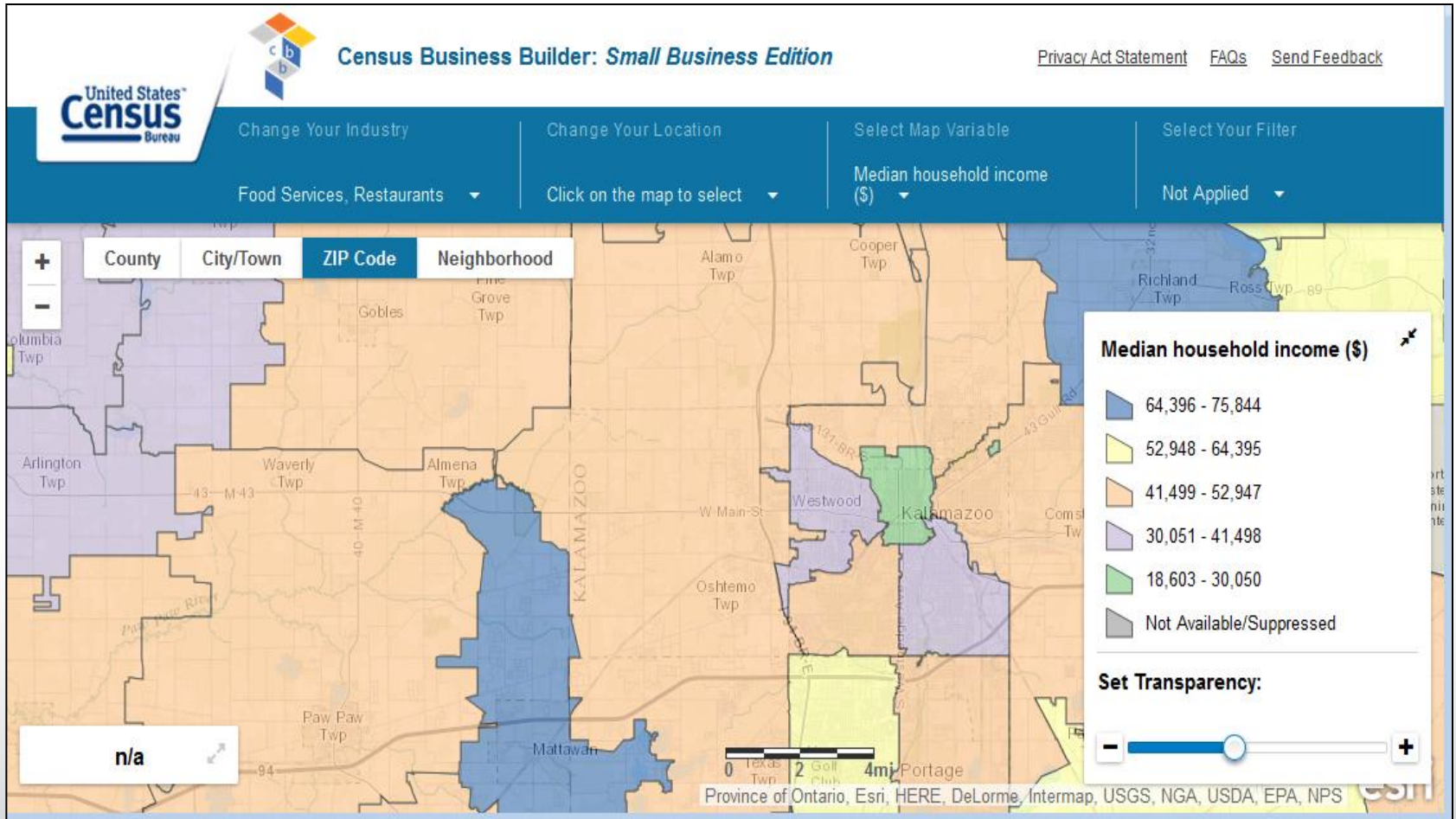
Data Product Types

Profiles

- Data Profiles (DP)
- Narrative Profiles (NP)
- Comparison Profiles (CP)
- Selected Population Profiles (S0201)

Tables

- Detailed Tables (B or C)
- Subject Tables (S)
- Ranking Tables (R)
- Geographic Comparison Tables (GCT)

Table/Profile Numbering

B 06004 A PR

- B=Data Product Type (Base Table)
- 06=Subject (Place of Birth)
- 004=Sequential Number (2 or 3 digits)
- A=Race/Hispanic Origin (White Alone)
- PR=For Puerto Rico Geographies Only

Data Profile vs Detailed Table

Subject	College Park city, Maryland			
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent	Percent Margin of Error
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Population 16 years and over	28,690	+/-368	28,690	(X)
In labor force	14,997	+/-559	52.3%	+/-1.9
Civilian labor force	14,938	+/-557	52.1%	+/-1.9
Employed	13,243	+/-619	46.2%	+/-2.1
Unemployed	1,695	+/-313	5.9%	+/-1.1
Armed Forces	59	+/-47	0.2%	+/-0.2
Not in labor force	13,693	+/-601	47.7%	+/-1.9
Civilian labor force	14,938	+/-557	14,938	(X)
Percent Unemployed	(X)	(X)	11.3%	+/-2.1
Females 16 years and over	13,697	+/-462	13,697	(X)
In labor force	6,982	+/-400	51.0%	+/-2.7
Civilian labor force	6,971	+/-401	50.9%	+/-2.7
Employed	6,429	+/-429	46.9%	+/-3.0
Own children under 6 years	851	+/-210	851	(X)
All parents in family in labor force	569	+/-184	66.9%	+/-14.2
Own children 6 to 17 years	1,242	+/-254	1,242	(X)
All parents in family in labor force	919	+/-199	74.0%	+/-12.9
COMMUTING TO WORK				
Workers 16 years and over	12,874	+/-642	12,874	(X)
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	6,220	+/-494	48.3%	+/-2.9
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	1,162	+/-277	9.0%	+/-2.2
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	1,686	+/-306	13.1%	+/-2.2
Walked	2,670	+/-304	20.7%	+/-2.2
Other means	433	+/-138	3.4%	+/-1.0
Worked at home	703	+/-210	5.5%	+/-1.6
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	26.7	+/-1.3	(X)	(X)
OCCUPATION				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	13,243	+/-619	13,243	(X)
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	6,203	+/-536	46.8%	+/-3.5
Service occupations	2,456	+/-382	18.5%	+/-2.6
Sales and office occupations	3,309	+/-373	25.0%	+/-2.7
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	709	+/-201	5.4%	+/-1.5
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	566	+/-126	4.3%	+/-0.9
INDUSTRY				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	13,243	+/-619	13,243	(X)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	6	+/-9	0.0%	+/-0.1
Construction	502	+/-172	3.8%	+/-1.3

	College Park city, Maryland	
	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	12,874	+/-642
Car, truck, or van:	7,382	+/-525
Drove alone	6,220	+/-494
Carpooled:	1,162	+/-277
In 2-person carpool	973	+/-235
In 3-person carpool	77	+/-56
In 4-or-more-person carpool	112	+/-93
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	1,686	+/-306
Bus or trolley bus	596	+/-174
Streetcar or trolley car (carro publico in Puerto Rico	0	+/-26
Subway or elevated	935	+/-201
Railroad	155	+/-89
Ferryboat	0	+/-26
Bicycle	350	+/-123
Walked	2,670	+/-304
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	83	+/-59
Worked at home	703	+/-210
Male:	6,548	+/-460
Car, truck, or van:	3,699	+/-387
Drove alone	3,134	+/-377
Carpooled:	565	+/-166
In 2-person carpool	461	+/-143
In 3-person carpool	49	+/-43
In 4-or-more-person carpool	55	+/-51
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	1,050	+/-238
Bus or trolley bus	362	+/-140
Streetcar or trolley car (carro publico in Puerto Rico	0	+/-26
Subway or elevated	576	+/-151
Railroad	112	+/-81
Ferryboat	0	+/-26
Bicycle	229	+/-93
Walked	1,163	+/-191
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	59	+/-49
Worked at home	348	+/-168
Female:	6,326	+/-439
Car, truck, or van:	3,683	+/-409
Drove alone	3,086	+/-380
Carpooled:	597	+/-171
In 2-person carpool	512	+/-147
In 3-person carpool	28	+/-37
In 4-or-more-person carpool	57	+/-55
Public transportation (excluding taxicab):	636	+/-154
Bus or trolley bus	234	+/-104
Streetcar or trolley car (carro publico in Puerto Rico	0	+/-26
Subway or elevated	359	+/-103
Railroad	43	+/-44
Ferryboat	0	+/-26
Bicycle	121	+/-69
Walked	1,507	+/-208
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	24	+/-29
Worked at home	355	+/-99

Application Programming Interface (API)

Source Us!

U.S. Census Bureau's *[YYYY-YYYY]* American Community Survey *[1/3/5]*-year *[estimates/statistics/data release]*

College Destinations: How We Rank Them
American Institute for Economic Research - Apr 7, 2014
Sources: **U.S. Census Bureau**; **American Community Survey**, **2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates**, Table B01003; using ...

NMSU Valencia County Extension providing youth develo…
New Mexico State University NewsCenter - Apr 14, 2015
... Mexico and $53,046 for the United States, according to the **U.S. Census Bureau's 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate**.

Census Estimates Show Progress Toward ACA Coverag…
Health Affairs (blog) - Sep 28, 2015
Source: **U.S. Census Bureau**, 2013 and **2014 American Community Survey 1-year estimates** from Table S2701 in American Fact Finder.

Continue the Conversation #ACSdata

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AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY
DATA USERS GROUP

- Purpose:
  - Improve understanding of the value and utility of ACS data.
  - Promote information sharing among data users about key ACS data issues and applications
- Membership is free and open to all interested ACS data users
- Webinars and special sessions at professional meetings planned
- Users group website and online community

http://www.acsdatausers.org/

Need Local Stats?

- Assistance Near You!

  Our regional data staff can help you access local statistics from the ACS or offer training to help build your skills. Contact us at the following address: clmso.ddb.questions@census.gov

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Questions?